

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 20 without prejudice or disclaimer.

1. Cancelled

2. Cancelled.

3. (Previously presented) A shelf stable pasta or rice meal comprising in combination:

(a) a cooked pasta or rice which has been acidified to a pH in the range of about 3.7 to about 4.5;

(b) a pH modified sauce for use with said cooked pasta or rice, the sauce comprising an added edible alkaline or base substance, such that said sauce has a pH in a range of about 5.9 to about 7.2,

wherein the edible alkaline substance is selected from the group consisting of disodium phosphate, disodium phosphate duohydrate and sodium hydroxide;

wherein said sauce is one selected from the group consisting of cheese sauce, brown sauce, bordelaise sauce, mushroom brown sauce, white sauce, alfredo sauce, curry sauce, dill sauce, horseradish sauce, veloute sauce, hollandaise sauce, bearnaise sauce, mornay sauce, raisin sauce, cream gravy, giblet gravy and tomato sauce.

4-19. Cancelled.

20. Cancelled.

21. (Previously Presented) A shelf stable pasta or rice meal comprising in combination:

(a) a cooked pasta or rice which has been acidified to a pH in the range of about 3.7 to about 4.5;

(b) a pH modified sauce for use with said cooked pasta or rice, the sauce comprising an added edible alkaline or base substance, such that said sauce has a pH in a range of about 5.9 to about 7.2,

wherein the edible alkaline substance is selected from the group consisting of disodium phosphate, disodium phosphate duohydrate and sodium hydroxide.

22. (Previously Presented) A shelf stable pasta or rice meal comprising in combination:

(a) a cooked pasta or rice which has been acidified to a pH in the range of about 3.7 to about 4.5;

(b) a pH modified sauce for use with said cooked pasta or rice, the sauce comprising an added edible alkaline or base substance, such that said sauce has a pH in a range of about 5.9 to about 7.2,

wherein the sauce comprises 0.7-1.0% of the edible alkaline substance.

23. (Previously Presented) The shelf stable pasta or rice meal of claim 22, wherein said sauce is one selected from the group consisting of cheese sauce, brown sauce, bordelaise sauce, mushroom brown sauce, white sauce, alfredo sauce, curry sauce, dill sauce, horseradish sauce,

veloute sauce, hollandaise sauce, bearnaise sauce, mornay sauce, raisin sauce, cream gravy, giblet  
gravy and tomato sauce.